

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

For Release June 30, 1978

Parker 202/343-5634

FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS FOR SPORT FISH AND WILDLIFE RESTORATION EXAMINED IN DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The publication of a draft environmental impact statement on two Federal grant programs for sport fish and wildlife restoration was announced in the June 30, 1978, Federal Register by Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The statement examines programs instituted by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 (Dingell-Johnson Act or D-J) and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (Pittman-Robertson or P-R). It considers the impacts of the two programs on populations of big and small game, migratory game birds, sports fish, nongame fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, several categories of land, air and water quality, soils, and economic conditions. The statement also discusses five alternatives to the current programs which would alter the degree of Federal funding or control of the programs.

A public hearing on the statement will be held at 9 a.m. on August 15, 1978, in the Interior Department Auditorium, 18th and C Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Written comments on the statement are also invited through September 1, 1978. Comments should be addressed to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FA), Washington, D.C. 20240. Copies of the statement can be obtained by writing the Director.

Through the two programs, Federal funds from excise taxes on arms, ammunition, archery equipment, fishing rods, and certain other fishing tackle are provided to State fish and game agencies for use in fish and wildlife restoration and management. The funds are apportioned to each State according to its land area and the number of hunting and fishing licenses it sells. Projects to be funded are selected by the State, but they must be approved by the Federal programs. If approved, the State is reimbursed for up to 75 percent of project costs.

In 1970, the Pittman-Robertson Act was amended to provide funds to the States for hunter safety programs. Forty-four States have taken advantage of this funding and have been able to improve the quality of their hunter training.

X X X